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## **Indianapolis Symphonic Choir to release new CD ahead of Carnegie Hall performance**

*Choir returns to legendary concert hall after nearly 40 years for New York City debut of “Zabur”*

*Recording to be released via Naxos Records on October 14*

INDIANAPOLIS (September 29, 2016) – The Indianapolis Symphonic Choir’s first release on a major recording label, *Zabur* will be available beginning Friday, October 14, 2016 via Naxos Records. The highly anticipated record will be released just two days prior to the New York debut of *Zabur* at Carnegie Hall, the Symphonic Choir’s first performance at the famed performing arts venue since 1978.

Conducted by Indianapolis Symphonic Choir Artistic Director Eric Stark, currently marking his 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the Symphonic Choir, *Zabur* is the first oratorio written by composer Mohammed Fairouz, originally commissioned and debuted by the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir alongside the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra in April 2015 at historic Hilbert Circle Theatre in downtown Indianapolis.

The recording will also feature the Indianapolis Children’s Choir and Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, as well as tenor Dann Coakwell and baritone Michael Kelly.

“We feel like a kid in a musical candy shop right now” declared Executive Director Michael Pettry. “As if commissioning *Zabur* to be composed in the first place wasn’t enough, to have signed with the largest classical music label in the world is an entirely new league of ball for us. In what may be a monumental understatement: We couldn’t be more jazzed!”

“Whenever we can share with the world the truly top-tier music being created in Indianapolis, we feel that the Symphonic Choir is not only serving the musical art form admirably, but also walking the walk as good artistic citizens of Indianapolis,” adds Artistic Director Eric Stark. “The release of *Zabur* on a CD with many of our close musical collaborators trumpets the good artistic creation taking place right here at home. A win!”

Described by *BBC World News* as “one of the most talented composers of his generation...,” Mohammed Fairouz is an adept and accomplished writer for the voice with hundreds of art songs to his credit. For *Zabur*, Fairouz looked to Stravinsky’s “Symphony of Psalms” (a setting of the Psalms in Latin) and Bernstein’s “Chichester

Psalms” (again, a Psalm setting, this time in Hebrew) as models. “I was eager to bring my own cultural dimension to the Psalms,” he said. “By bringing back the essential Arabic aspect of the Psalms as well as by setting the ancient texts in a contemporary environment, *Zabur* attempts to take the Psalms 'off the shelf' and restore their original form as raw human poetic documents.”

Tickets for the performance of *Zabur* at Carnegie Hall (Sunday, October 16 at 2 p.m.) are on sale now and available for purchase at [www.indychoir.org](http://www.indychoir.org) or through the Carnegie Hall website.

The Indianapolis Symphonic Choir celebrates 80 years during the 2016/17 season. For more information and to purchase a copy of *Zabur*, visit [indychoir.org](http://indychoir.org).

### **About the Indianapolis Symphonic Choir**

The Indianapolis Symphonic Choir is proud to be one of the nation’s most established and dynamic musical institutions, marking its 80<sup>th</sup> season in 2016/2017. Among the most active symphonic choruses in the United States, the Choir reaches in excess of 25,000 people each season with more than 25 performances and a comprehensive educational outreach program. The 200 volunteer singers demonstrate the Choir's commitment to musical excellence through their talent and dedication during each 42-week season. The choral partner of the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Symphonic Choir was founded in 1937 at the ISO's request to perform the great choral-orchestral repertoire. This continued partnership exhibits the very best of collaborative ideals – two independent arts organizations combining their strengths to create beautifully lasting musical results. The Choir is dedicated to excellence in the performance of choral music, the creation of new choral masterworks, and to community outreach and education throughout the community. The Choir is now in its seventh year as the official choral partner of the Indianapolis Public Schools, providing teacher training, educational resources, performance experiences and free printed music. For more information about the Symphonic Choir, visit [www.indychoir.org](http://www.indychoir.org).

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